Air Intelligence Units are being strengthened, selection procedure made stringent, and the frequency of surprise checks by the other supervisory staff and vigilance staff of the various Commissionerates and Custom Houses are being increased.

Efforts to Increase Tourists in Assam

*273. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether special efforts have been made by Government to increase the number of tourists visiting Assam during current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof separately for domestic and foreign tourists;

(c) whether some new areas of attraction have been added;

(d) if so, the details thereof with amount spent by Union Government;

(e) whether Union Government propose to make joint efforts with some other States of the country to increase tourism potential in future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of India has recently amended the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963 which will ease the restrictions imposed on the movement of foreign tourists to Assam. In addition, more air links have been allowed to the North East region including Asssam, which will benefit both domestic and foreign tourists.

(c) and (d) The main attractions for the tourists in Asssam continue to be Wildlife, adventure, pilgrimage etc. During 1994-95, a sum of Rs. 52.99 lakhs has been santioned as Central Financial Assistance for the State of Assam.

(e) and (f) The Government of India will continue to make joint efforts with all States of the Country to increase the tourism potential by improving infrastructural facilities, by publicity and marketing efforts, human resource development etc.

Behaviour of Customs Officers with Passengers

*274. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:
SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Airports in general and Madras in particular are harsh to incoming air passengers;

(b) if so, what steps are proposed to ensure that customs officers behave with politeness, consideration and ractitude to passengers;

(c) the measures proposed to ensure that Madras Customs take immediate corrective steps; and

(d) whether Government are also aware of the unpleasant incidents suffered by outgoing passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Apart from attending promptly to complaints of rude behaviour, the Department is also having training programmes to inculcate proper behaviour, conduct and helpful attitude to the officers at the airports.

(d) Government are aware of some incidents where Customs officers have to check at random or on an information, some outgoing passengers for prevention of smuggling of contraband like narcotics, antiques, wildlife products, foreign exchange, etc. out of the country.